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C O N F I D E N T I A L BAGHDAD 003909

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/29/2017  
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [IZ](#)  
SUBJECT: KRG PRESIDENCY COUNCIL'S REP ON ARTICLE 140: WE  
WANT UN INVOLVEMENT

REF: A. BAGHDAD 3828  
[1](#)B. BAGHDAD 3682 (EXDIS) AND PREVIOUS

Classified By: Classified By Deputy Polcouns Greg D'Elia for reasons 1.  
4 (b) and (d).

This is an Erbil Regional Reconstruction Team message.

[1](#)1. (C) In a November 26 meeting with RRTOffs, Kadir Aziz, KRG Presidency Council Representative for Article 140 and Toiler's Party Secretary General, and Sahd Emin, KRG Minister of Region for Parliament Affairs, expressed strong interest in the United Nations assuming a role in the Article 140 process. Specifically, Aziz said the UN should engage in defining the district boundaries and provide technical assistance for the referendum. Aziz said he had spoken with incoming SRSG Staffan di Mistura and encouraged him to determine the UN role in Article 140 by year's end. He added that the GOI must ask the UN for assistance with Article 140, and underscored that the Iraqi constitution provides for the UN to assume a role if the Presidency Council cannot agree on a way forward.

[1](#)2. (C) Aziz also asked the U.S. to pressure PM Maliki to complete the Article 140 process. He said the U.S. must not simply stand aside and let events run their course. He was concerned that if the situation was not resolved quickly, the GOI will fail to demonstrate the political will to resolve disputes over Kirkuk, and Iraqi unity may crumble.

[1](#)3. (C) Aziz called PM Maliki an "obstacle" to the Article 140 process, and said he did not trust the PM to support the work of the High Committee on Article 140. He noted the Kurdish population was not satisfied, and lacked confidence in the abilities of the Iraqi government, the PUK, and the KDP to deliver the referendum. Aziz said he believed the Kurdish population would accept an extension of the Article 140 committee work, if the extension is perceived as technical, and not political. Aziz agreed with RRTOffs on the importance of preparing the Kurdish population for the inevitable delay in the process.

[1](#)4. (C) Comment: Aziz's push for UN involvement may be in part the result of the Kurdish feeling that Maliki's government cannot be trusted to implement Article 140. The UN seems increasingly perceived by the Kurds as the viable last resort to resolve, peacefully, the Kirkuk question. Aziz agreement on the importance of preparing the Kurdish population for an "extension" of the Article 140 process is a step in the right direction. We will continue our push to have KRG officials announce an Article 140 extension. End Comment.  
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